

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Applicants confirm the election of claims 13 and 14; the rest of the claims have been cancelled.

Claim 13 has been rewritten as an independent claim which further incorporates the subject matter of claims 2 and 5. Claim 13 has been further amended to make clearer that the product is dosed into washing machine drum at the beginning of the wash cycle, but does not disperse or release the contents until the rinse cycle. See page 9, lines 13-16 of the specification and the example at page 70, lines 13 -15. Dependent claims 15 – 22 have been introduced which recite the subject matter of the original dependent claims.

It is desirable to provide a rinse conditioning composition which is convenient to use and guarantees that the correct amount of fabric softening composition is dosed into the rinse cycle. It is also desirable to avoid the problem of spillage of the product associated with the dispensing of conventional rinse conditioners from a bottle or the like. See page 1, line 30 – page 2, line 4 of the specification. Many types of water soluble packages are known, including packages made from polyvinyl alcohol (hereinafter referred to as "PVOH") film. A wide variety of different materials can be packaged in such films, including liquid materials. See page 3, lines 8 – 11 of the specification. It is desirable to be able to provide a product which can be dosed into the washing machine drum at the beginning of the wash cycle but does not disperse or release its contents until the rinse cycle. See page 9, lines 13 – 16 of the specification.

The inventors have now found that a water soluble package can be chemically modified so that the rate at which it breaks down, e.g. dissolves, disperses or otherwise disintegrates, is dependent on the concentration of washing

detergent present in a liquor. In particular, it has been found that by modifying the structure of a water soluble polymeric film, such as a PVOH film, with a modifying group, the film remains substantially intact in the presence of an anionic and/or nonionic detergent, e.g. during the wash cycle of a laundry operation, and disintegrates when the concentration of the detergent reduces sufficiently, e.g. during the rinse cycle of the laundry operation. See page 10, line 24 – page 11, line 6 of the specification.

Claims 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto et al. (US 5,135,982), Haschke (AT 408548) or Hayes (WO 97/19961).

Matsumoto discloses a water-soluble packaging film containing a predominant amount of partially acetalised product of polyvinyl alcohol by benzaldehyde derivatives. It is stated in column 2, lines 54 to 59 that the film has good solubility in aqueous solutions of alkali, acid and salt. There is no information regarding the solubility of the film in the presence of anionic or non-ionic surfactants although Example 4 shows that the film is suitable for packaging laundry detergent powder. This reference neither discloses nor suggests that it would be possible to package a fabric conditioner in the packaging film and that the resulting package would survive the main wash of a laundry process and release its contents during the rinse cycle.

WO9719961 is acknowledged on page 7 of the application and discloses fast-solubility polymers, made of PVOH materials co-polymerised with carboxylate moieties and which have some degree of lactonisation. The materials dissolve quickly in detergent solution. See the abstract and Examples 10-39.

AT408548 relates to PVOH materials that contain builders for improvement of detergency during the wash cycle.

In summary, the cited prior art does not disclose the concept of producing a water-soluble package that is insoluble in the presence of anionic/non-ionic

surfactants of the main wash and yet will release a fabric conditioning composition during the rinse cycle.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn and application as amended be allowed to issue.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's acknowledgement of documents submitted with Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement concurrently herewith.

If a telephone conversation would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of the present application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,



Rimma Mitelman
Registration No. 34,396
Attorney for Applicant(s)

RM/sa
(201) 894-2671